THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. "Foodgrade" is a commercial term used for "hydrocarbon free" jute bags developed specifically for packaging coffee, cocoa and shelled nuts to meet the specific requirements of these industries. Jute bags contain prescribed quantity of JBO and are internationally used and actively traded, Ministry of Environment and Forests has notified permitting use of 3% Non-halogenated hydrocarbons in manufacture of ECOMARK hessian and sackings. "Foodgrade" jute bags are only used for packing of coffee, cocoa and shelled nuts in selected international markets. Jute mills have, however, been instructed to restrict the use of JBO upto maximum of 3%.

Sickness in industrial units engaged in trade and making of ready made garments

†4092. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase in sickness in the industrial units engaged in the trade and making of ready-made garments under the Textile Industry over the last few years;

(b) if so, the percentage-wise increase in sickness estimated in the year 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001; and

(c) the number of units which were closed down in the first three months of the year 2001-2002 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR) : (a) to (c) As per latest information available from Reserve Bank of India, the numbers of sick SSI units in the textile industry including garment units at the end of March, 1998, 1999 and 2000 were 11065, 24306 and 25764 respectively. There are no reports from the industry or trade regarding increased closure of garment units.

Export Promotion Councils

4093. SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state :

(a) the role of Export Promotion Councils in export promotion efforts of India;

(b) the list of the Export Promotion Councils under administrative control of the Ministry of Textiles;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.